

A year in stories

Annual Impact Report 2020/21



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A message from our Chair and Group CEO

Welcome to Age UK Medway's 2020/21 Annual Impact Report.

In the years to come, this report will stand out for its uniqueness, sharing as it does, the ways in which we navigated our way through the immense challenges brought by the Covid-19 pandemic. From disregarding our normal ways of working, to hastily launching virtual services; from creating an emergency appeal for our future, to collaborating with local and nationwide beneficiaries and businesses; we responded by providing a wide range of vital and essential support to make sure we were the charity, and the lifeline, older people needed throughout the crisis.

On 23rd March 2020, just 8 days before the start of this financial year, the single most challenging twelve months for our charity commenced as the Prime Minister announced the first of three national lockdowns and encouraged older people to stay home. That was the day we, as a charity supporting older people, were thrown into turmoil and forced to completely disregard our recently approved strategic plan. In its place was drawn up an emergency plan; one which ensured we could continue to provide vital support to Medway's older generation during the unprecedented situation, and throughout what was for so many, an extremely isolating time. And of equal importance in the plan, were the contingency measures to save the charity's future, which was by no means certain given the enforced closure of our face-to-face services, and the immense drop in income that represented.

As this Impact Report shares, that emergency plan proved successful, and the infographics and case studies shared over the following pages tell the story of our survival and how, despite the odds, we still managed to provide 210,583 hours of support to older people during the most turbulent year imaginable.

Towards the end of the financial year, the Prime Minister announced a roadmap out of lockdown, signalling light at the end of the tunnel for society, and the chance for the charity to plan for the future under more normal circumstances. The vaccination programme has been rolled out quickly, and we look forward to a brighter, less eventful year ahead, beginning with the re-opening of our charity shop in April.

On reflection, we are extremely proud of the manner we responded to an unpredictable and challenging year. We are in awe of the loyalty and unwavering commitment our staff and volunteers showed during a deeply unsettling time for so many. We are grateful for the dedication and leadership shown by our board of trustees and senior team, as they governed and steered the charity through unprecedented circumstances. And we are immensely proud of the contribution we made to support Medway's older people at a time when they needed it, and us, more than ever.



Alan Bates
Chair



John Norley
Group Chief Executive

This year we...



...provided 30,599 fresh, homemade meals to customers in the community.



...benefitted from the support of 120 volunteers, providing 22,895 hours of volunteering...



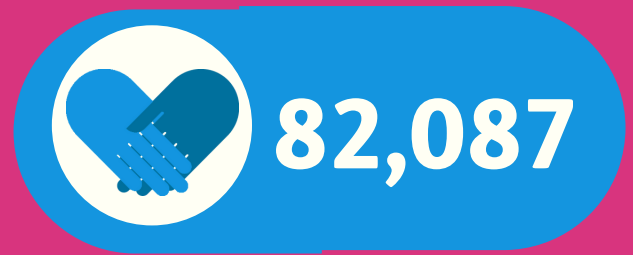
...provided 36,688 hours of mainstream day care to 309 clients.



...saving us over £237k that would otherwise have been spent on staff salaries.



...provided 9,828 hours of Befriending to 63 individuals, by 60 of our volunteers.



...provided 82,087 homecare visits to 344 clients, giving 46,795 hours of support.



...fundraised £265,590 via our Urgent Appeal for Support.

About us

Our vision is for an age friendly and inclusive Medway, where older people are wholly supported and encouraged to live a full and enjoyable later life.

Since its foundation in 1974, the charity formerly known as an Age Concern has existed in several guises providing services across the Medway towns. It is now proud to be a local brand partner of the national Age UK charity, and is fully committed to;

- Working with and for older people
- Providing the highest possible standard of care and support
- Treating people with dignity and respect
- Providing responsive and flexible services
- Promoting the independence of all older people
- Providing services that meet the needs of the individual
- Promoting the rights of people who use our services

We provide services with a real impact

Each service we offer is designed to support the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of our clients, and to help them remain independent, and with choice and control in their lives. They are run by experienced and trained staff, all familiar with the challenges faced by older people, and who know how to ensure each individual gets the most of out of the service.



**DAY CENTRE/
SOCIAL CLUBS**

Delivered from our Gillingham centre (our Strood centre closed in March 2021) mainstream day care service provides social interaction for individuals aged over 50 and living in Medway.

With a full day including hot drinks, refreshments, and a freshly prepared two course lunch, clients also benefit from events and activities designed to keep them mentally stimulated. These include arts and crafts, reminiscence groups, and bingo, whilst the accessible garden allows them to enjoy some fresh air, and light gardening activity.

Further details about our Mainstream Day Centre can be found at:

www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/our-services/day-services/



**DEMENTIA CARE/
SERVICES**

Our specialist day services are available at our Capstone Day Centre in Chatham, as well as the Pat Warner Suite in Gillingham, to anyone diagnosed with dementia or memory problems.

With an ethos focused on understanding each individual and their needs, care is delivered through stimulating activities ranging from cookery and cake making, to arts and crafts and reminiscence. The service also provides an opportunity for respite to family and carers of those living with the condition, allowing them to continue a daily routine in the knowledge their loved ones are being looked after in a secure and caring environment.

Further details about our Dementia services can be found at:

www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/our-services/dementia-services/



HOMECARE

Delivered by extensively trained staff, our Homecare service is there to help with the care needs of older people throughout Medway and Faversham.

The service offers a full range of support, from domestic calls to personal care, providing each client with the assistance they need to remain independent in the comfortable and reassuring surroundings of their own home.

Further details about our Homecare services can be found at:

www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/our-services/homecare-services/



MEAL DELIVERY

Our Meal Delivery Squad provide door-to-door delivery of a hot, freshly-cooked midday meal and dessert to older residents in specific postcode areas of Medway.

Age UK Medway's meal delivery service caters to all dietary requirements, and uses locally sourced ingredients to prepare traditional and nutritious meals.

Further details about our Meal Delivery Squad can be found at:

www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/our-services/meal-delivery-squad/

To read about our many other services, visit:
www.ageuk.org.uk/medway

Read our case studies about our impact during the Covid-19 pandemic on the next pages.



BEFRIENDING & COMPANIONSHIP

With 1.4 million chronically lonely older people in England, befriending is a vital service to so many, supporting their emotional and mental wellbeing.

Delivered entirely by volunteers, Age UK Medway is proud of the difference its face-to-face and telephone befriending service makes to the lives of local older people.

Further details about our Befriending services can be found at:

www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/befriending-volunteer/



COVID-19 SERVICES

On 23rd March, the country entered its first national lockdown, and we were forced to close the day centres and dementia services relied on by so many. With a strong sense of our responsibility, we worked tirelessly between April and August to find a way to continue to reach our customers whilst they were safe in their homes, by launching the following services

- Virtual Day Centre (A virtual package, including a Good Day Call, a freshly cooked meal delivered door-to-door, an Activity Pack filled with quizzes, recipes and games, and a 30-minute activity phone call with a qualified member of staff).
- Prescription Collection
- Free emergency hampers
- Shopping trips/packs
- Pen Pal Service
- Regular welfare calls
- Emergency visits to help with minor jobs



Memories of Lockdown

On 23rd March 2020, when it had become clear that the Covid-19 virus was spreading out of control, a national lockdown was declared, and the British public asked to stay at home.

Along with others with known health conditions, all over-70s were considered to be at higher risk of contracting the virus, and were instructed to isolate for a long period of time, both to protect themselves, and to alleviate the growing pressure on the NHS.

However, it is well known that social isolation in older adults puts them at greater risk of cardiovascular, autoimmune, neurocognitive, and mental health problems. And so it was, as contact with their friends, family and caregivers became limited, the isolation so dangerous to their health worsened.

To exacerbate the situation, the charity was forced to close its mainstream and dementia day centres, leaving over 300 older people who attended each week without the social interaction and care they would normally receive.

We knew we had to act quickly, and set about considering how best to serve and protect our clients and the older communities in Medway.

We interviewed 3 of those clients, to understand the profound impact the lockdown had on each of them.

Here are their stories...



*M*argaret

"It has made me appreciate things, and people. I see things very differently now."

A resident of Medway for 51 years, Margaret's husband passed away four years ago. He had been living with dementia, and was cared for by Margaret for nine months before he died.

Shortly before lockdown began, Margaret had moved temporarily into a care home, to ensure that she could receive the support she needed whilst recovering from a broken hip. She was relieved to be taken out in time, and not be forced to spend the entire twelve weeks of lockdown in a care home.

Along with her broken hip, Margaret had been experiencing a difficult time in the lead up to the lockdown, as a lifelong friend suffering from cancer had been admitted to hospital for an operation. Margaret said, *"I had been talking to her on Facetime whilst she was in the hospital and she seemed fine. But then, out of the blue, I received the news she had died suddenly of a heart attack. It was such a terrible shock for me, as I had known her all my life."*

Finally, to make worse what was already a deeply emotional and upsetting time, her brother was found dead in his home, just a few months later. Margaret told us, *"I was already quite low when we first went into lockdown, and now I was trying to process all of this too."* Margaret said. *"I couldn't go out anywhere to take my mind off things, and so my thoughts just went over and over in my head".*

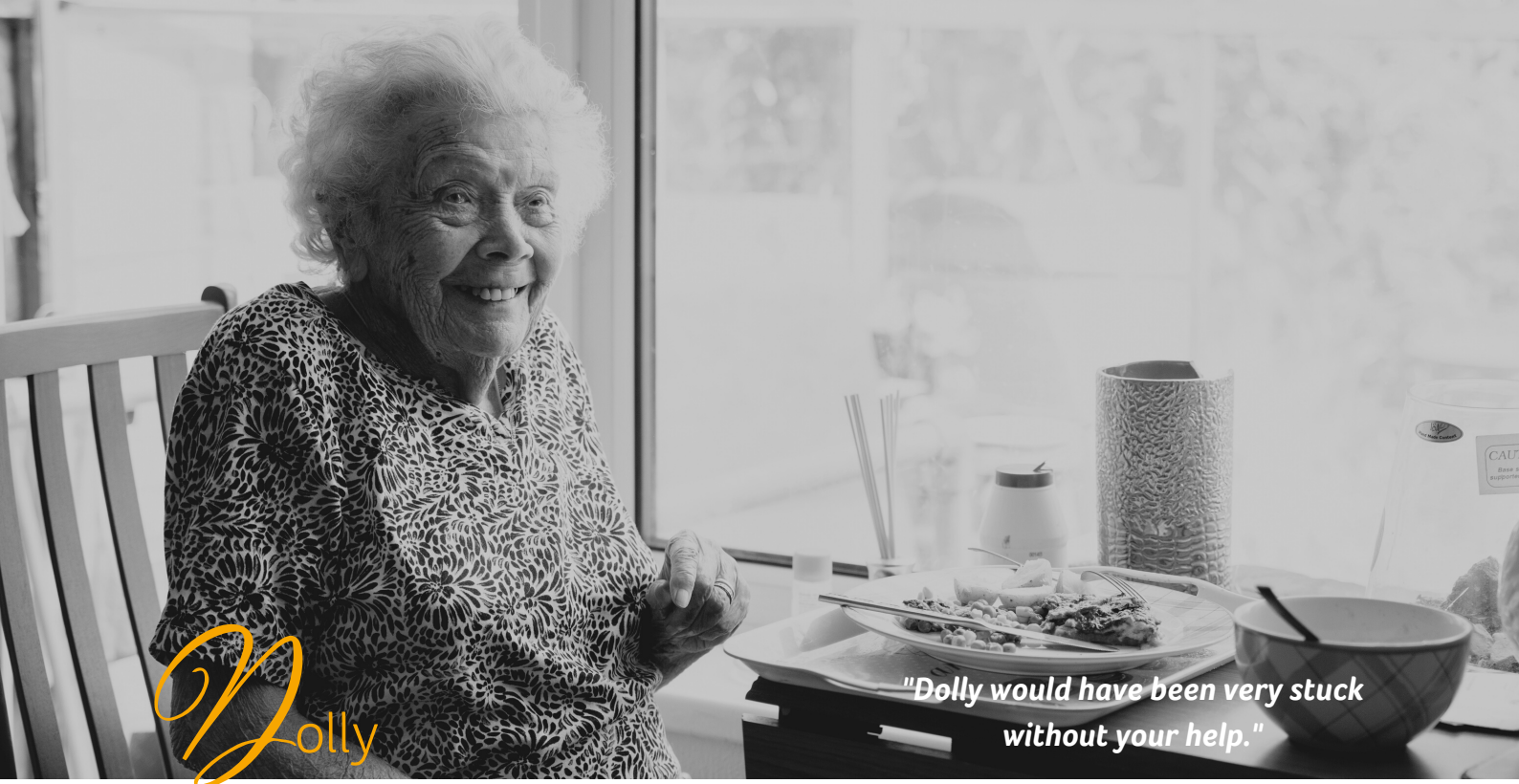
Margaret recalls how Age UK Medway's Befriending service helped her enormously through this hard time. *"It gave me someone to talk to... to let everything out. I feel so sad for all the people who have died from this virus."*

Margaret feels she is so very lucky to have Age UK Medway, as well as her daughter and grandson, to have helped her through a very emotional and confusing time. And since she has come back to the day centre, she has made a new friend and is starting to enjoy life again.

"I love being at the Age UK Medway Day Centre, and am now looking forward to having a meal outside in a beer garden in the summer."

Margaret*, 93 years old

**name has been changed*



"Dolly would have been very stuck without your help."

Dolly has many fond memories from her life, career and marriage. She was married to her husband, Arthur, for an incredible 72 years. Now, at 102-years-old, Dolly told us of how she spent much of the lockdown recalling her vivid memories of when she was a young woman during the second world war. *"I remember getting the train from Strood to Bond Street in London every morning",* she told us, *"I was working my way up to become a Dress Maker; I was earning £3 a week."*

One day, in August 1939, Dolly arrived to work to be told that if war is declared, she mustn't come back until they send for her. Dolly told us, *"well, a war was declared that very weekend on 1st September 1939, and I never did go back"*. However, in her late 50's, Dolly reignited her dress making passion and went to night school to get her City and Guilds qualification in Dress Making. Since then, she has designed and made countless wedding and bridesmaids dresses for her family and friends.

Dolly later became a Caretaker at Chattenden Primary School, where many children used to arrive early especially to see her, so that she could teach them how to smock. After retiring from her Caretaker job, she went back to college to take a Millinery course, again passing her City and Guilds with a distinction. Dolly was due to begin teaching at the local college, but before she could take up the position her husband had a stroke and she gave up on her dream of teaching to take care of him. Dolly later took up an upholstery course in her free time, as she loved to spend her time embroidering and knitting. Sadly, Dolly has lost some of the feeling in her fingers and finds it difficult to enjoy her favourite hobbies now, but luckily, she had a little visitor to look forward to seeing during lockdown... her very own *"little pet hedgehog"*!

However, it wasn't just the hedgehog's visits that Dolly looked forward to. During lockdown, Dolly struck up a special friendship with local Firefighter, Bryan, who was volunteering for Age UK Medway to deliver a freshly cooked meal from one of our centres to her home, as her son Geoff lives outside of Medway and was not allowed to travel to help her with shopping. Geoff describes his mother Dolly as *"a very independent lady who doesn't like to ask for help, even when she needs it"*, but it seems her bond with Bryan made it easier to accept the help she needed. Dolly's Support Officer, Hayley, at MHS Homes, said that Dolly would have been *"very stuck"* without our meal delivery service.

Dolly, 102 years old

**Visit our YouTube channel
to watch our video about
Dolly & Bryan**



Peggy

"I compare lockdown to prison."

Peggy's husband, John, passed away suddenly in 2015 aged just 65, leaving behind Peggy and their three children. Peggy and John had been planning a long life together. She told us, *"I'd always imagined us sitting together on Brighton Pier and having an ice cream. I believe I will see him again one day, and that we will have that ice cream."*

The lockdown took Peggy back to that time, and John was on her mind a lot as she spent time at home alone. *"I don't like change and I began to suffer with terrible headaches."* Peggy believed her eyes were the cause of her headaches, which were worsening in lockdown, and so rather than sit on the NHS waiting list, she saved up over £3,000 to pay for a private eye operation. One day during lockdown, however, Peggy received a call from a man claiming to be from her bank. As convincing as he was manipulative, he persuaded her to disclose the details he needed to access her account, and stole the £3,000 she had saved for her much-needed operation.

Once a distraught Peggy had realised what had happened, she contacted her bank and pleaded with them to help, but they refused. Upset and unsure what to do, Peggy got in touch with us, and we stepped in and contacted the Financial Ombudsman on her behalf, explaining the vulnerable position she was in. With their intervention, the bank finally agreed to return the £3,000, allowing a greatly relieved Peggy to continue with the arrangements for her eye operation.

Despite the happy ending, though, the incident worsened the isolation Peggy was already feeling during lockdown. *"I missed my friends from the day centre, and I couldn't have my grandsons stay with me as I usually did. I even pushed my sofa over to the front door and sat with it open so that I could see people walk by."*

Peggy was left feeling even more vulnerable after a nasty fall in her garden, in which she broke her wrist. *"It was really frightening having to suddenly cope alone,"* she said, *"and having been able to enjoy my own outdoor space, my fall meant that I was now even too scared to go into my garden on my own."*

And that frustration and despair with life under lockdown sadly further compounded when Peggy lost her brother, following long battle against illness. *"These things are terrible enough in normal times, but when it all happens in lockdown, the horror is magnified".*

The enforced isolation, and the trauma of each incident she had experienced, unsurprisingly caused Peggy's mental health to decline. Peggy said;

"I don't know what I would have done without the daily phone calls from Age UK Medway. I really looked forward to them, knowing I would have someone to talk to who would listen and understand. I also loved receiving the Activity Packs; they have me something to get my teeth into, and really alleviated the boredom and isolation."

Peggy told us that lockdown made her appreciate her freedom and that she won't take it for granted again;

"I was so relieved when it was over and I could go back to the Day Centre again."

Peggy*, 69 years old

**names have been changed*



150+

shopping packs delivered



1,000

activity & welfare calls made



12

Kent Fire & Rescue Service Volunteers



108,816

miles travelled by our Community Carers

To stay up to date with our impact on a regular basis, follow us on social media:



@ageukmedway

Financial Review

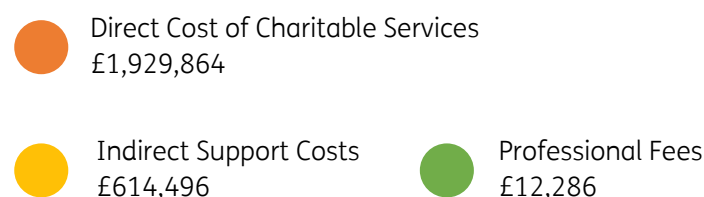
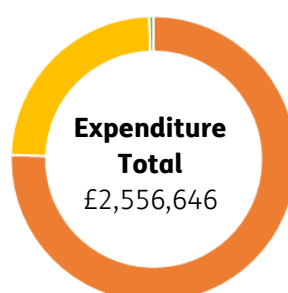
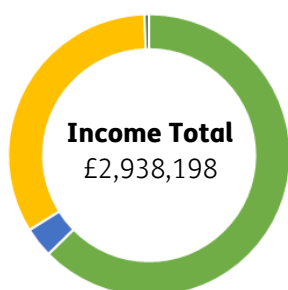
Our total income for the year was £2,938,198.

Income from our charitable activities was significantly impacted by the pandemic, declining by £408,979 from the 2019/20 financial year, to £1,840,610 for the twelve months to March 31st 2021.

Likewise, the charity's year-on-year expenditure also decreased, albeit to a far lesser degree, from £2,573,115 in 2019/20, to £2,556,646 for 2020/21.

In spite of the considerable challenge faced for much of the year, the charity ended 2020/21 in a surprisingly healthy position, reflecting the success of its relationships, a fundraising campaign which drew on the empathy for the charitable sector shown by society, and the tireless effort and commitment of our executive leadership, staff, and volunteers.

	2020/21	2019/20	Percentage
Total incoming resources	£2,938,198	£2,250,895	+16.6%
Total resources expended	£2,556,646	£2,573,115	-0.6%
Net incoming (outgoing) resources	£381,552	(£52,220)	-
Total funds as at 1st April	£1,231,265	£1,283,485	-4%
Total funds as at 31st March	£1,612,817	£1,231,265	+31%



Fundraising for our Future

We would not be here today without your donations.

In the face of the considerable challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, our future was extremely uncertain and so, in April 2020, we launched our first ever fundraising campaign, aiming to raise £500,000 to save our charity, and the services on which so many vulnerable people rely each day.

The closure of our beloved Mackenney Centre in Gillingham, Chris Ellis Centre in Strood, and Dementia Centre in Capstone, meant we were unable to provide what would have amounted to 102,908 hours of social clubs, activities, and specialised dementia care between April and August. This was a catastrophic loss to the older people who were isolated at home during those months. And for us, as a charity whose survival is so reliant on the income it can generate, it was essential we reach out for help. We knew we had to ensure we could not only continue to support Medway's older people during the pandemic, but be there for them in the future.

Thanks to our amazing donors, we raised an incredible £265,590 which, whilst not reaching the target of £500,000 we had set ourselves, enabled us to continue to pay the staff we needed out in the community, and launch an emergency Virtual Day Centre to replace the face to face services we were unable to provide. This package included a range of options, designed to support each person's physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing: a Good Day welfare call; a nutritious freshly cooked meal delivered to the doorstep; an activity pack made in-house by our incredible staff team; and a thirty-minute activity phone call with a qualified member of our care team. We also made sure our customers could keep in touch with the friends they were sorely missing, by introducing a 'Letter to a Friend' programme.

We weren't alone either! When the older people of Medway needed its community the most, we joined forces with Medway Council, Nucleus Arts, MHS Homes, the Kent Fire & Rescue Service, and many others to ensure no older person went without, when they asked for our support.

To all those who supported us, and without whom we would not be here today...

Thank you!

**£265,590
raised from
1st April 2020
to 31st
March 2021**

2020/21 in numbers



200+
shopping packs,
hampers & prescriptions
delivered

2,950
virtual activity packs
posted and 2,000
virtual activity
phonecalls made



12
Kent Fire & Rescue
Service Firefighter
Volunteers throughout
the entire pandemic



100+
volunteers helping to
deliver services in the
Medway towns



54
minutes taken for our CEO
and Commercial Director
to cycle 26 miles!



1
'Master Poet' prize
awarded for best
lockdown poem

Thank you

Corporate Donations

BAE Systems
Barclays
Bow Financial Services
CVC Capital Partners
Lloyds Bank
Standard Chartered

Trust & Charity Donations

Miramar Care Home
Pamela Champion Foundation
Royal Engineers Lodge of Freemasons
Strood Relief in Need
Watts Almhouses

Grant / Trust Funding

Charities Aid Foundation Resilience Fund
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
Tesco Bags for Help Fund

Community Fundraisers

Blitz 'n' Pieces Band - VE Day Concert
John Norley & Nick Chamberlain - 2.6 Challenge
Mandy Cole - Head Shave Fundraiser

Public Donations/Fundraisers

There are too many public donations to mention individually, but we extend a tremendous thank you to each and every person who has donated to or fundraised for us. However big or small, it makes all the difference and enables us to continue the vital work we carry out in the community, supporting Medway's older people.

Community Donations

Asda, Chatham
Asda, Gillingham Pier
The Craft Cotton Co
Happinotes
Hygiene Bank Medway
Kent PPE Support
Marks and Spencer Hempstead Valley
Medway Council
MidKent College
Moondance Bar Rochester
Morrisons, Princes Park
Painting Our World in Silver
Silk Elephant
South East Decorators Ltd
Spyglass and Kettle
Tesco, Snodland
Vokes, Rainham & Windmill Taxis

Community Partnerships

Kent Fire & Rescue Service
KSS CRC
Lance Print
Photography by Ellie
Medway Council
Mhs Homes
Nucleus Arts

Without your support, we wouldn't be here today.

Get Involved

There are many ways to support us in our mission to help the older communities of Medway love later life.

As an independent, local charity we are responsible for raising our own funds to keep serving our older local communities. Anyone can get involved, whether you are a resident, part of a local business or group, a student, or someone who has been supported by us.



Donate to Us

Donating is one of the quickest and easiest ways to help support Age UK Medway, which is why we've made it as easy as possible.

Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/get-involved/donate



Fundraise for Us

There are many different ways you can fundraise for us. Get involved in one of our current events, or start one of your own with our support.

Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/get-involved/fundraise-for-us



Partner with Us

A partnership with us could be beneficial for your business by helping you meet your corporate social responsibility objectives. It's a great way to motivate employees, get some great PR and help us to support vulnerable older people in the local community.

Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/get-involved/corporate-partnerships



Volunteer for Us

The team at Age UK Medway is one that has been going for over 45 years, during which time we've built up a high quality team of paid staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide the high quality service that our clients expect.

Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/medway/get-involved/job-and-apprentice-opportunities



Keep in touch with Us

Get the latest news, updates and info from Age UK Medway

Follow us on social media:     

Visit our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/medway



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Registered Charity number 1133023. Company number 06876354.